



## **Division of Air Quality – 2016 Wildfire Update**

*Department of Environmental Quality*



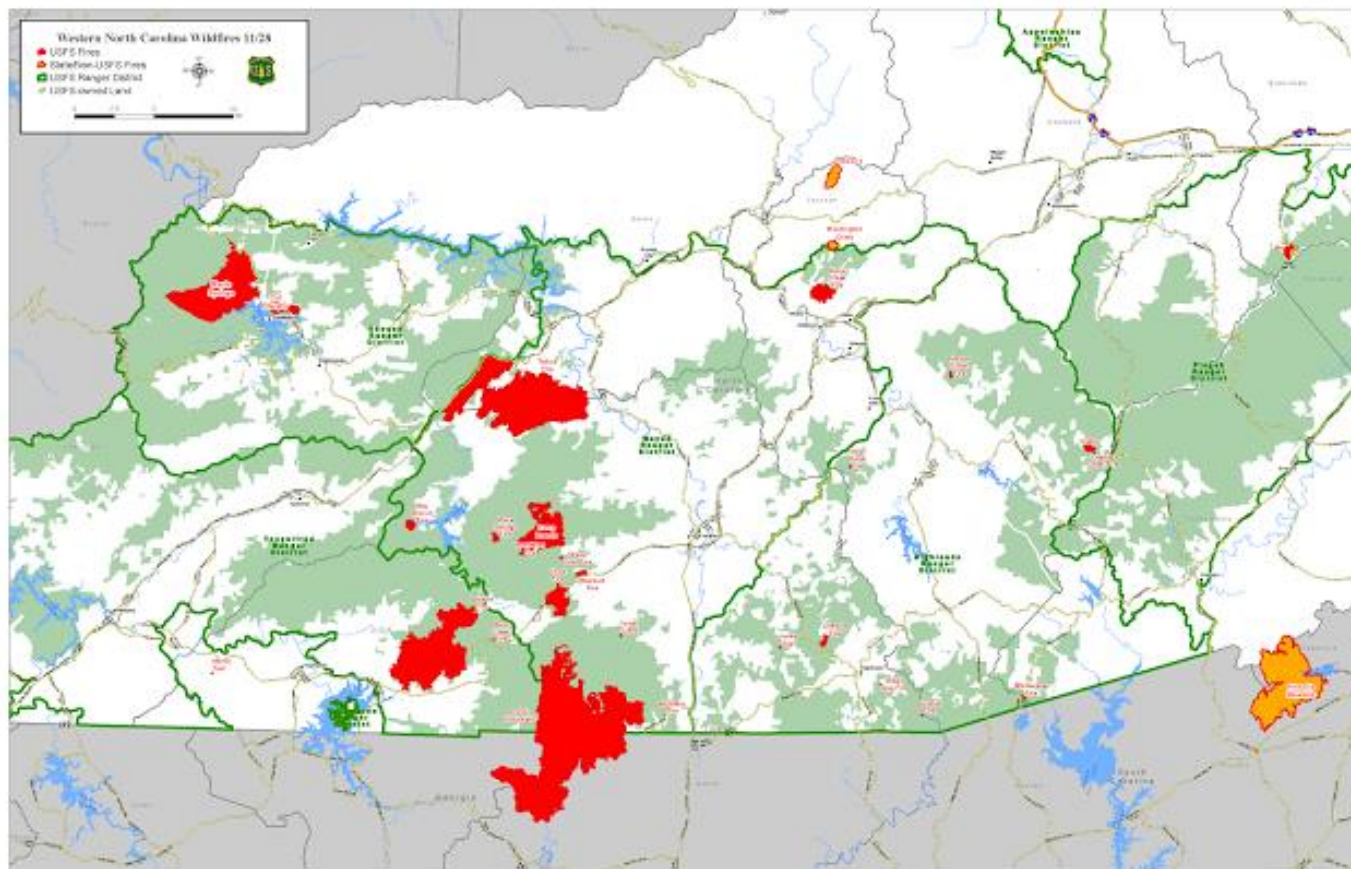
## *Great Team Effort*

- NC Emergency Management
- NC Forest Service
- NC Department of Health and Human Services
- NC Department of Transportation
- NC Department of Environmental Quality
- Local Health Departments
- US Forest Service
- Western North Carolina Regional Air Quality Agency
- Mission Hospital
- Media Outlets





**~30 Wildfires  
>80,000 Acres  
October 23 ~ November 28**



*Department of Environmental Quality*





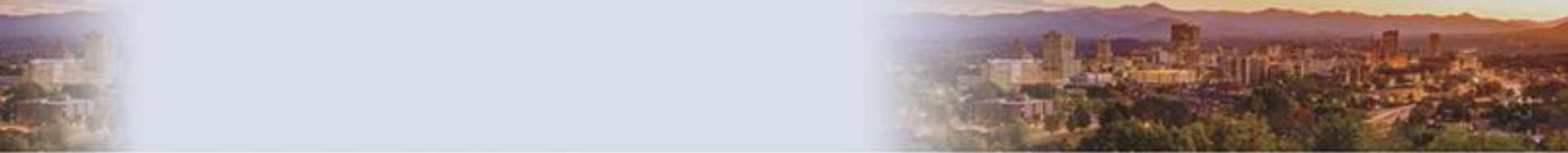
# NC Wildfire Update





# NC Wildfire Update





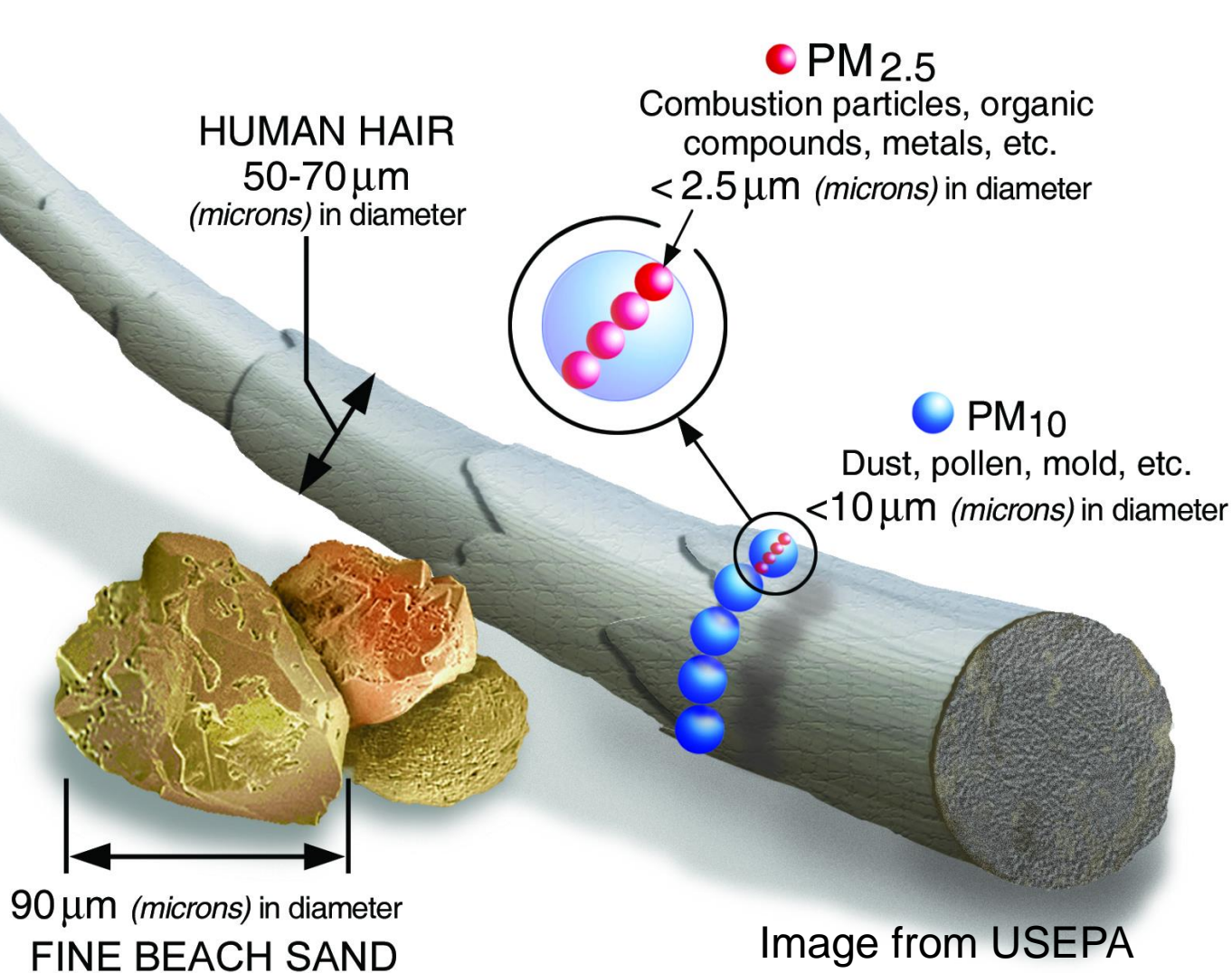
**Particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>)** is the principal pollutant of concern from wildfire smoke

**Health effects:**

- eye and respiratory tract irritation
- persistent cough, phlegm, wheezing
- difficulty breathing
- reduced lung function
- bronchitis
- exacerbation of asthma
- premature death

*Department of Environmental Quality*

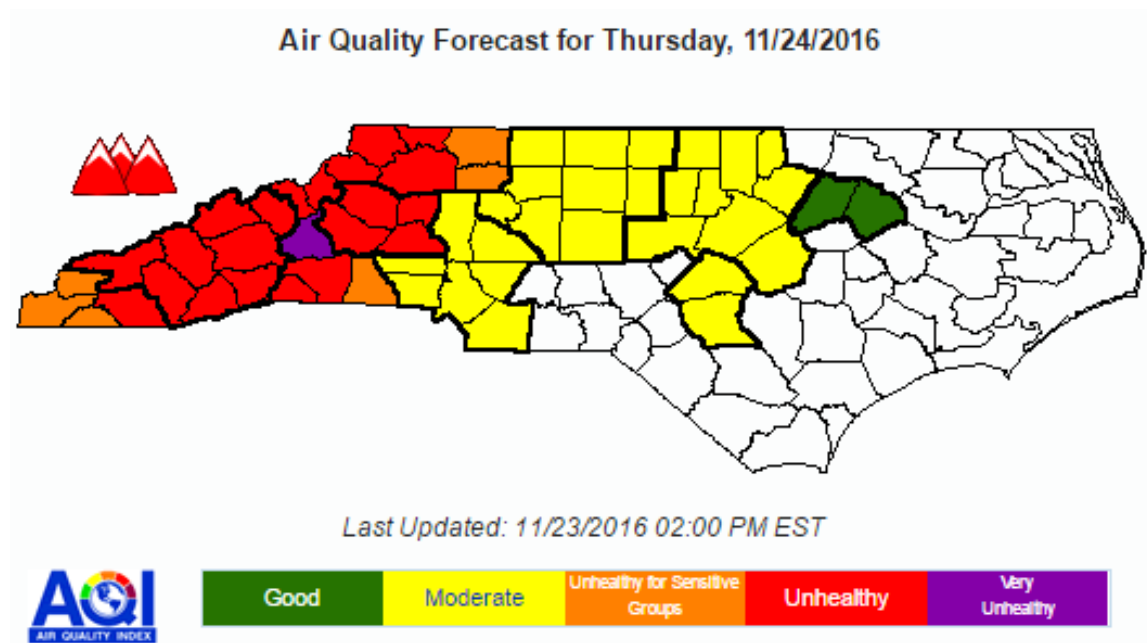






## DAQ Efforts:

### 1.Forecasting



*Department of Environmental Quality*



## Air Quality Index Levels of Health Concern

## Meaning

<b>Good</b>	<b>Air quality is considered satisfactory, and air pollution poses little or no risk.</b>
<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Air quality is acceptable; however, for some pollutants there may be a moderate health concern for a very small number of people who are unusually sensitive to air pollution.</b>
<b>Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups</b>	<b>People with respiratory or heart disease, the elderly and children should limit prolonged exertion.</b>
<b>Unhealthy</b>	<b>People with respiratory or heart disease, the elderly and children should avoid prolonged exertion; everyone else should limit prolonged exertion.</b>
<b>Very Unhealthy</b>	<b>People with respiratory or heart disease, the elderly and children should avoid any outdoor activity; everyone else should avoid prolonged exertion.</b>
<b>Hazardous</b>	<b>Everyone should avoid any outdoor exertion; people with respiratory or heart disease, the elderly and children should remain indoors.</b>



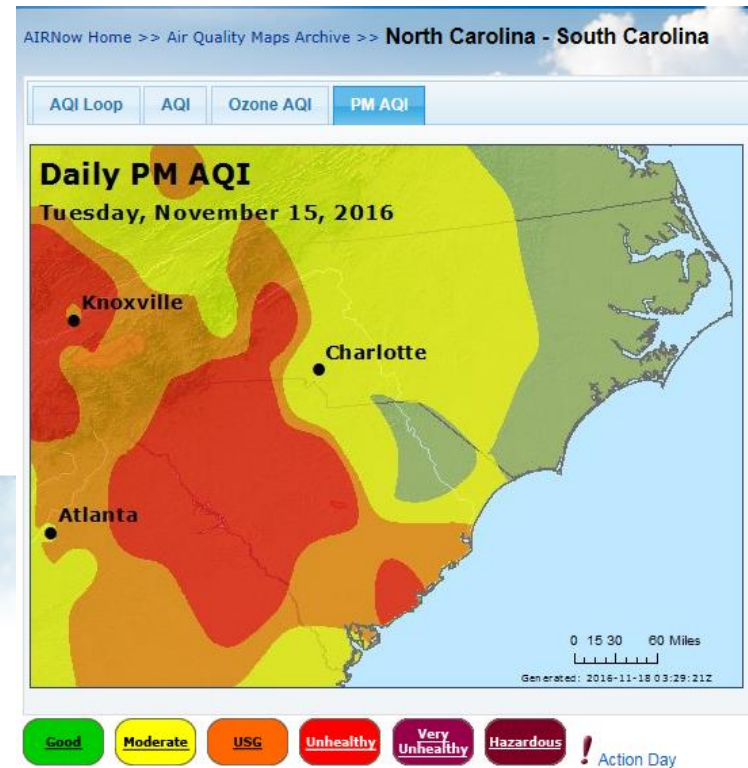
### Current Air Quality for Asheville Valleys (below 4000 feet), NC

Sunday, November 06 - 4 PM

The most recent hourly estimate of Particle Pollution (2.5 microns) reached 122 AQI (Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups).

We are sending you this alert because your local air quality may be changing. Take action appropriate for your health conditions -- and please monitor the latest conditions at [www.airnow.gov](http://www.airnow.gov).

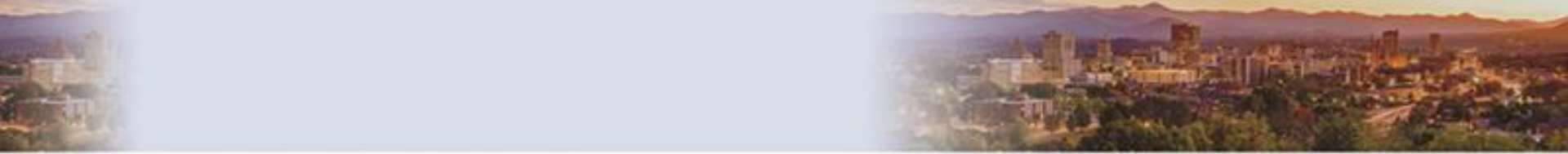
*Department of Environmental Quality*



**Orange**







## DAQ Efforts (continued) ...

- 2. Press Releases
- 3. Phone calls and Emails
- 4. Ambient Monitoring

*Department of Environmental Quality*



# NC Wildfire Update



# NC Wildfire Update





# NC Wildfire Update





# NC Wildfire Update





# Mobile Monitors - PM<sub>2.5</sub>



## WNC Permanent monitors:

- Bryson City
- Cherokee (Tribal monitor)
- Asheville (WNCRAQA)
- Spruce Pine
- Hickory

## NCDAQ/NCFS Mobile Monitor

### Sites:

- Sylva
- Lake Lure
- Rutherfordton
- Marion
- Hendersonville

## USFS Mobile Monitors

- Robbinsville
- Andrews
- Franklin
- Brevard
- Burnsville

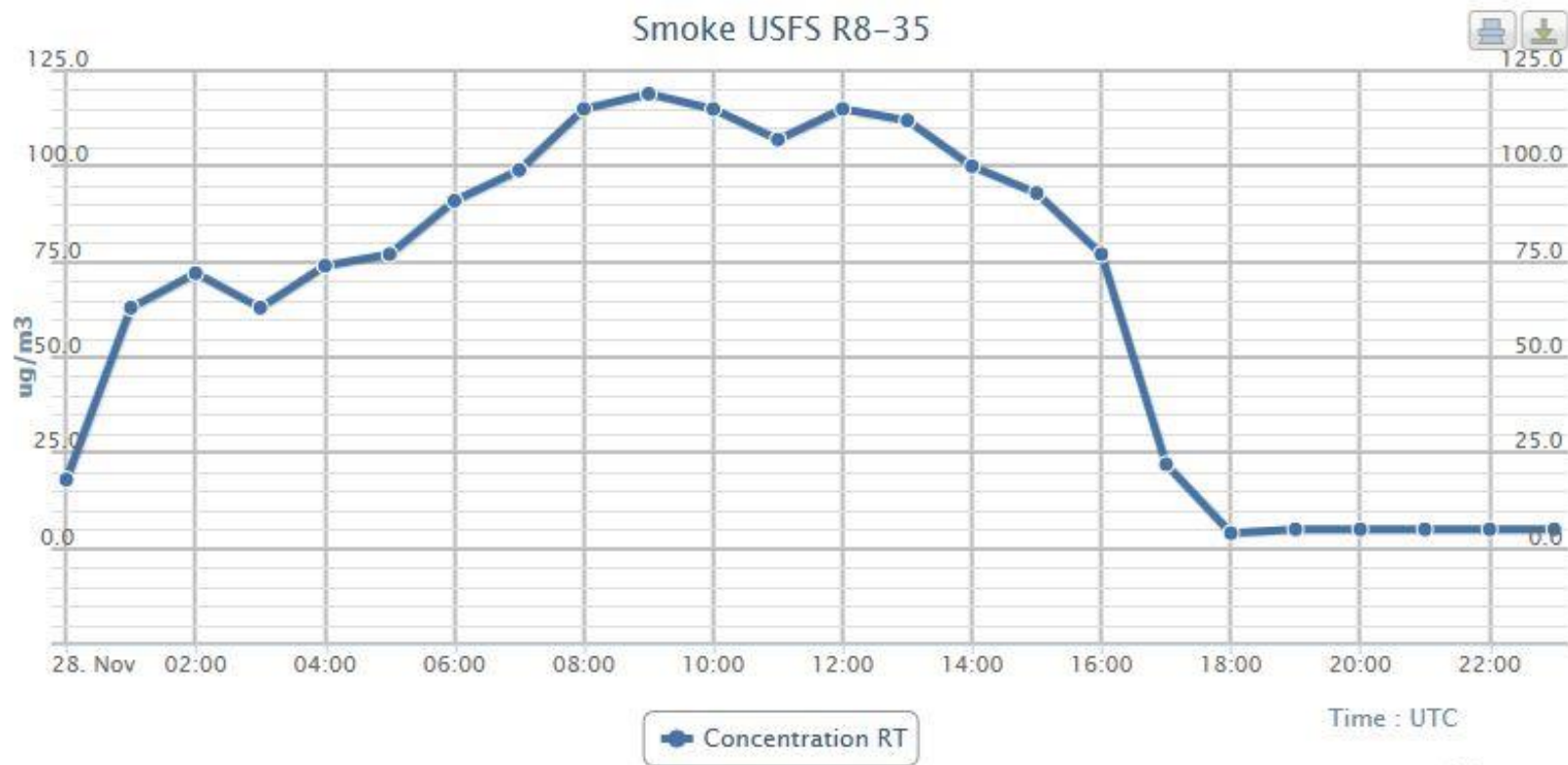




Robbinsville November 28

← Prev day    Next day →

Smoke USFS R8-35



Highcharts.com

Department of Environmental Quality



# Preliminary\* Fine Particle (PM2.5) Data – November 2016

- **Daily (24-hour) standard for fine particles is 35 micrograms per cubic meter**
- **DAQ's permanent monitors registered:**
  - 20 exceedances in the Code Orange range
  - 12 exceedances in the Code Red range
- **DAQ/NCFS/USFS temporary monitoring sites registered:**
  - 4 exceedances in the Code Orange range
  - 8 exceedances in the Code Red range
  - 2 exceedances in the Code Purple range
  - 2 exceedances in the Code Maroon range

**\*Unofficial preliminary data. Pre-quality assured data.**

# NC Wildfire Update

Visibility Guide to Smoke and Air Quality		
Visibility (miles)	Air Quality Index	AQI Color
10+	0 - 50	Green (Good)
6 - 9	51 - 100	Yellow (Moderate)
3 - 5	101 - 150	Orange (Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups)
1 - 3	151 - 200	Red (Unhealthy)
1 or less	201 - 300	Purple (Very Unhealthy/Hazardous)



## Participation in the USFS “JIC” Joint Information Center (November 15 - December 4)



**North Carolina JIC**  
Joint Information Center for up-to-date information about wildfires in North Carolina.

Home Air Quality & Smoke Burn Bans Arson Reporting Donations Prevention  
Media Resources Tennessee Fire Information

Sunday, November 27, 2016

**11/27/16 Air Quality in Many Areas Downgraded on Sunday afternoon - 4:15pm**

Smoke appears to be entering the several areas on Sunday afternoon. Because of this, the Air Quality forecast has been downgraded to Code Orange for the Asheville area. Macon County has been downgraded to code purple and significant visibility issues are being reported.



Chapel near the Dick's Creek Fire last week

Asheville is being impacted by the Pinnacle and Rock Mountain Fires. The Burnsville and Spruce Pine areas are being impacted by the Clear Creek Fire. And Macon County especially the Franklin area, is being impacted from smoke from the Rock Mountain Fire.

Go to this web address for more information about North Carolina air quality updates: <https://xapps.ncdenr.org/aq/ForecastCenter>

**Welcome!**  
We're glad you found our blog. This blog is operated by the Public Information Officers and Agency representatives working in the Joint Information Center (JIC) in Asheville, North Carolina. We are dedicated to providing timely and accurate information about the wildfires in North Carolina.  
We hope you find what you need here.

**Contact us**  
Email: [ncjicinformation@gmail.com](mailto:ncjicinformation@gmail.com)  
Phone: 828-575-2840

**Follow by Email**  
Email address...

**Search This Blog**

**NC Links**  
[NC Forest Service News](#)

**Tennessee Fires**  
[Tennessee Fires](#)

*Department of Environmental Quality*



# Questions?



**Sheila Holman, Director**  
Division of Air Quality  
[sheila.holman@ncdenr.gov](mailto:sheila.holman@ncdenr.gov)  
919-707-8430

**Mollie Young**  
Director of Legislative Affairs  
[Mollie.Young@ncdenr.gov](mailto:Mollie.Young@ncdenr.gov)  
919-339-9433

***Also check out:***

[www.ncair.org](http://www.ncair.org)

<http://ncjic.blogspot.com/>